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Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7376th meeting
Thursday, 5 February 2015, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Liu Jieyi	(China)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Chad	Mr. Mangaral
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	France	Mr. Lamek
	Jordan	Mr. Hmoud
	Lithuania	Mrs. Jakubonė
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mr. McLay
	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Spain	Mr. González de Linares Palou
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

The situation in Guinea-Bissau

Report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (S/2015/37)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Guinea-Bissau

Report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (S/2015/37)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Ghana, Guinea-Bissau and Timor-Leste to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Miguel Trovoada, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, and His Excellency Mr. Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission and Permanent Representative of Brazil, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/37, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau.

I now give the floor to Mr. Trovoada.

Mr. Trovoada (*spoke in French*): I thank the Council for the opportunity to present the report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/37) on recent developments in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS).

Since the most recent update of the Secretary-General to the Council (S/2014/805), some noteworthy developments have been observed, including the holding of a summit of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in Abuja, on 15 December 2014, where it was decided that the mandate of the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB) would be extended in its current configuration for six months, which could be renewed.

Regarding the reform of the defence and security forces, the incumbent Minister of that sector has introduced new amendments to the legislation on the creation of the special pension fund. She has also presented the Prime Minister with a list of personnel eligible for demobilization and retirement, which is being analysed.

In January, the Minister of Justice led the review and validation of the proposed programme of reform of the judiciary. The validated document will incorporate all the proposals to be submitted by the Government to the round table of international partners, scheduled for 25 March in Brussels. That will be another important step towards the establishment of an accessible, transparent and credible system of justice in Guinea-Bissau.

Also in January, the Human Rights Council undertook the second universal periodic review of Guinea-Bissau. It made recommendations, particularly in terms of strengthening the protection of human rights and the fight against impunity and human rights violations committed in the past. It also recommended the country's accession to a number of legal instruments and the ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

On the social front, the Government has been able to continue providing basic services to the population and to ensure an acceptable level of prevention against the Ebola outbreak. Overall, the actions and decisions taken indicate that neither the desire for change nor the support of partners has wavered.

Let me draw the Council's attention to the direction in which the Government intends to move. In accordance with its programme for the next four years, unanimously approved by the National Assembly, the Government has defined a strategy and priorities for the Brussels round table, which is of special importance to UNIOGBIS. As for the first goal — the consolidation of the rule of law, promoting good governance and reform of State institutions — there has been encouraging progress in strategic planning and the drafting of legislation, particularly in the fields of defence, security and justice. With a view to strengthening national unity, the National Assembly has reactivated the commission to promote national dialogue and established the structures necessary to do so.

Despite these efforts, the situation remains fragile because, as the Secretary-General often says, there can be no lasting peace without development and no development without lasting peace. It is certain that there will be neither one nor the other without the primacy of the rule of law and respect for human rights. In this regard, the United Nations system in Guinea-Bissau welcomes the adoption by the Government of an integrated approach ensuring the complementarity of efforts towards poverty eradication and economic development with good governance, thereby creating the potential for the promotion of social progress.

The priorities announced by the Government to the strategic assessment mission show that the return to constitutional order, as positive as it has been, has not yet made it possible to address the root causes of instability in Guinea-Bissau. This means that the socio-political environment is characterized by a climate in which hope for a future free of uncertainty coexists with a sense of stability that remains precarious. Guinea-Bissau continues to need support, including in strengthening democratic institutions, restructuring the defence and security sector, strengthening the judicial system, improving the functioning of the public administration, and increasing its capacity to fight impunity and transnational crime, among others.

Accordingly, the Secretary-General recommends the strengthening of the good offices of his Special Representative in order to contribute to the promotion of an environment of peace and stability while encouraging dialogue towards national reconciliation. Trust among the political leaders of the country remains unquestionably an essential element of stability. Similarly, UNIOGBIS should continue to promote the strengthening of cooperation between Guinea-Bissau and its international partners by providing a coordinated response to the country's reform efforts. In that respect, special attention must be paid to deepening the partnership with ECOWAS, the African Union, the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries and the European Union, given the regional, continental, international and cultural dimensions of the issue of development in Guinea-Bissau.

Let me stress a third aspect by reaffirming that Guinea-Bissau needs ECOMIB and that ECOMIB needs the support of the international community and in particular the Security Council. The deployment of a regional force is an exceptional measure taken by ECOWAS, whose primary task as a regional economic community is to promote the socioeconomic development of its member States with a view to short-, medium- and long-term integration.

It is clear that the assistance provided by the international community to Guinea-Bissau cannot last forever. In this perspective, the philosophy that must inspire the strategy of partnership between the country and the international community in the context of development assistance must seek to create, both for the people of Guinea-Bissau and for their partners, conditions that will allow Guinea-Bissau to do without international assistance. The United Nations is striving for that objective by taking initiatives and promoting actions to arrive at the point at which the country will no longer need either a political mission or a foreign military force on its soil.

The challenges are vast, numerous and complex, but they are not insurmountable. The consolidation of peace and stability in Guinea-Bissau, a prerequisite for development, requires joint efforts, patience and perseverance. In this context, the commitment of the Security Council and the international community as a whole to that country has never been more necessary, important and urgent in ensuring that the achievements won to date are consolidated and the excesses of the past are forever consigned to history.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Trovoada for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Patriota.

Mr. Patriota: Let me thank you, Sir, for the invitation to address the Security Council this morning in my capacity as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC).

I would also like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Miguel Trovoada for his insightful presentation and for sharing a vision of the progress, challenges and opportunities that Guinea-Bissau faces today. I am particularly grateful for his readiness to cooperate with the Peacebuilding Commission towards our shared objective of providing the best support to the authorities and the people of Guinea-Bissau.

Two weeks ago, the PBC Guinea-Bissau configuration held its first meeting of the year, to which we invited Special Representative Trovoada and Prime Minister Simões Pereira to brief from Bissau. We also invited the Department of Political Affairs to debrief on the

strategic assessment mission that the Council requested of the Secretary-General through resolution 2157 (2014), of 29 May 2014.

I would like to take this opportunity to attest to the commendable achievements since the new authorities came into power in Guinea-Bissau last June. I was able to witness that first-hand last fall when I travelled to Bissau. The careful analyses heard from the Prime Minister, the Department of Political Affairs and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General during our last PBC meeting, and again today from Mr. Trovoada, are all in agreement. As the PBC engages this year in an important review of the peacebuilding architecture, I believe that Guinea-Bissau provides some valuable lessons about the difference that a legitimate, competent and inclusive Government can make when combined with committed political accompaniment by international partners.

What is different today from any other time in the modern history of Guinea-Bissau is that, despite the existing challenges posed by rampant poverty and the legacy of decades of unsatisfactory governance, a better and more stable future for the country and its population seems to be within reach. With modest, timely and well-thought-out efforts, the new authorities of the country have put Guinea-Bissau on a promising track, while showing their willingness to overcome the dysfunction of the past and to do things in a democratic and inclusive results-oriented manner. In the seven months since the new authorities have been in power, politics has been conducted wisely and courageously, including on thorny issues such as the reform of the defence and security apparatus, the need to rebuild the social contract through national dialogue and reconciliation, and improving the justice system. This new era of progress has also been marked by the delivery of basic services to a greater number of people.

I am pleased that the Council is considering the recommendations of the Secretary-General's recent assessment, which provides a thorough and honest diagnosis of how Guinea-Bissau's ills from the past could be overcome. The report (S/2015/37) also emphasizes the risks that lie ahead. It places responsibility on the authorities to own and lead the reforms, paving the way towards democratization and prosperity. However, we know that, although this predisposition is essential, what is also required now more than ever is that our words of support translate into deeds. Our solidarity should catalyse long-term sustainable engagement. I should like, therefore, to urge regional neighbours, friends and partners of Guinea-Bissau to actively participate and ensure the success of the round table for Guinea-Bissau to be held on 25 March in Brussels. Let me remind the Council that we are dealing with a comparatively small-scale challenge. If we cannot succeed in Guinea-Bissau, how are we to contemplate success with regard to more complex and bigger problems?

We have come a long way in a short time with respect Guinea-Bissau, and opportunities to consolidate peacebuilding gains rarely present themselves in as promising a way as they do right now in the country. To build the State sustainably, the country will still require strong support from United Nations, especially the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission. The situation we are witnessing presents fertile ground for both bodies to cooperate and focus international support on the Government's priorities. That means that we should continue supporting the work done by the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), and thus welcome the renewal and update of its mandate for one year. We also recognize the valuable work done by the Economic Community of West African States Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB) in securing institutions and advancing security sector reform in the country, and we believe that the Security Council should politically endorse it. Both UNIOGBIS and ECOMIB are trusted partners of the Bissau-Guineans and have shown solidarity, understanding and the ability to make a significant difference during difficult times. Now that the situation is improving, their assistance will be more valuable than ever. Both institutions therefore require the Council's continued loyal support.

I would also like to emphasize the need to reinforce the role of civil society, especially of women and youth, in decision-making processes designed to change the paradigm of poverty and underdevelopment in Guinea-Bissau. It is time to start changing the long-held view that Guinea-Bissau is a chronic case of corruption, impunity and drug trafficking. We should favour an approach that maximizes the potential and promises of a nation full of youth, energy and desire to turn the page on its darkest history. For that, the State must foster dialogue across society, leading by example in ensuring that political actors continue to put their differences aside with a view to advancing the interests of the nation. We must redouble efforts, international partners and Bissau-Guineans alike, to ensure that

sustainable progress and stability become the new reality henceforth.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Ambassador Patriota for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Guinea-Bissau.

Mrs. P. D'Alva (Guinea-Bissau): First, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of February 2015. I also thank all Council members for allowing my delegation to come to the Council table.

At the outset, my delegation would like also to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau, His Excellency Mr. Miguel Trovoada, for the briefing he just gave on developments in our country and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), as well as for all his dedication and commitment to peacebuilding in Guinea-Bissau since his appointment. We commend the work of UNIOGBIS and welcome the recommendation of the Secretary-General to extend its mandate for 12 additional months.

Allow me also to express my country sincere appreciation to His Excellency Ambassador António de Aguiar Patriota, Permanent Representative of Brazil and Chair of Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), for his commitment and personal engagement and for his clear advocacy for concrete solutions for the consolidation of the peace process in Guinea-Bissau. The PBC Guinea-Bissau configuration has been an important partner for my Government because of its fundamental role on consolidating efforts by the international community to support and assist Guinea-Bissau.

We also extend our gratitude to Her Excellency Ambassador Sofia Mesquita Borges, Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste, for the statement she will make later on behalf of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP) and for the willingness of the Community to support our country on the new challenges for future.

After my country's long and struggle-filled road since the restoration of constitutional order, I confess to the Council that today I feel very optimistic as I take the floor here. As underlined by the previous speakers, the efforts and progress made by the democratically elected authorities of Guinea-Bissau have contributed tremendously to the improvement of the political and socioeconomic situation in the country. An environment with open communication, collaboration and understanding among the main elected institutions of the country also played an important role in the positive results been seeing in Guinea-Bissau today.

Since assuming office, the new Government has outlined three phases as part of a strategy to deal with challenges of the country, as reflectd in the Emergency Plan, the Contingency Plan and the Medium-Term Development Plan. When the Government took office, it was confronted with multitude of socioeconomic problems, including salary arrears, strikes by education and health-care professionals and difficulties in providing basic services such as electricity and drinking water. In addition to all those challenges, the subregion confronted by the Ebola epidemic, for which Guinea-Bissau needed to take preventive measures. The Government's Emergency Plan was aimed at focusing on tackling those immediate issues. Today we can proudly say that the Government was able to substantially reduce the arrears due civil servants, save the school year, significantly improve electricity and drinking water services and keep the health-care system functioning, including maintaining the level of no reported cases of Ebola in the country.

Within the framework of the Contingency Plan, the Government has created a national commission to verify all contracts previously drawn up by the transition Government concerning exploration of the country's natural resources, in the light of their legal legitimacy as well as their benefits for the country. The Government will submit its medium-term development plan to the international community at the international donor conference scheduled to take place on 26 March in Brussels.

The authorities and people of Guinea-Bissau are fully aware that the sustainability of peace and the development of our country are our primary responsibility. However, as a fragile country that has struggled with enormous difficulties and challenges for years, we are in serious need of the international community's support and financial assistance if we are to stay on the path to development. We need engagement on the part of our partners more than ever now so that, like the rest of the world, we can finally focus on our sustainable development goals. In that regard, we hope that all our partners and friends will stay with us on our new course and participate in the aforementioned

donor round-table conference. We appreciate and commend the United Nations, the African Union, the European Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the CPLP, the International Organization of la Francophonie and all of Guinea-Bissau's other bilateral partners for their involvement in the preparatory process for the conference.

Our Government is fully engaged in the process of reform, and as Prime Minister Domingos Simões Pereira reassured the International Contact Group for Guinea-Bissau at its last meeting, here in New York in November, Guinea-Bissau remains strongly committed to implementing all the reforms necessary to enable the country to continue to move ahead. While we are working on many important reforms, reform of the security sector remains one of the Government's priorities, and in fact has already begun, though slowly, with contributions and support from ECOWAS and other bilateral and multilateral partners. President José Mário Vaz's appointment in September of a new chief of the armed forces, the creation of a national security-sector steering committee, the Government's engagement through the Ministry of Defence and the recent handover of our military infrastructure, including four army barracks that are being refurbished under the country's defence and security-sector reform programme by the ECOWAS Commission, show that reform is indeed under way.

For all those efforts, we commend and thank Ghana, the current Chair of ECOWAS, for all its efforts and for all that ECOWAS has been trying to do to maintain peace and stability in Guinea-Bissau. However, for those efforts to really be sustainably implemented, Guinea-Bissau is counting on financial assistance from all its bilateral and multilateral partners to enable it to secure and maintain its pension fund for retired military personnel.

In conclusion, I would like to draw the Council's attention to the fact that all the problems that Guinea-Bissau has faced have been repeatedly reported on in the Council and in various international forums over the years. We believe the time has now come for concrete action, and that is what the people of Guinea-Bissau expect from the international community and all those present here. Guinea-Bissau has so much to give to the world, and with the support of the international community and the will and perseverance of its humble people, that will be possible.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Ghana.

Mr. Kanda (Ghana): At the outset, I would like to congratulate China on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month and on its distinguished leadership. I would also like to affirm the appreciation and continued support of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Ghana for the Council's work towards world peace and security for sustainable development.

On 18 November, the tenth meeting of the International Contact Group for Guinea-Bissau was held at here at United Nations Headquarters, under the leadership of the Foreign Ministers of Ghana and Timor-Leste, in order to explore effective ways of coordinating and harmonizing international interventions for the best possible results in our efforts to ensure Guinea-Bissau's political stability and economic recovery. Our deliberations were not oblivious to the scarcity of available resources for urgent and competing global needs. Yet the need for us to strive hard to sustain and make progress kept us resilient, in the belief that with the Council's support we will be able to give the people of Guinea-Bissau hope for the future.

Since then, some progress has been made by the Government of Guinea-Bissau, ECOWAS, the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries and the United Nations towards sustaining the gains necessary for Guinea-Bissau's political stability and economic recovery. I would therefore like to thank the Secretary-General for his report dated 19 January (S/2015/37) on developments in the country and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau. We urge all partners to continue to support Guinea-Bissau. ECOWAS supports the Secretary-General's recommendation for the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau to be extended for a period of 12 months, until 29 February 2016.

For its part, ECOWAS will continue to support efforts to consolidate peace, stability and security as well as to promote sustainable development in Guinea-Bissau. Consequently, we have extended the mandate of the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB) beyond 31 December 2014 for another six months, retaining the existing force strength despite the impact of the Ebola virus disease on West Africa's fragile economies. United Nations support for ECOMIB's

work is indeed essential to maintaining the progress that has so far been made in the country.

In view of the current political challenges facing the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, the Government has put together a three-phase reform programme encompassing emergency, contingency and development plans, and has urged its development partners to help with the process. At its 33rd meeting, the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council recommended, among other things, that international partners participate actively in the Guinea-Bissau international donor conference, intended to help finance the country's proposed reform programme. To that end, Ghana will host a preparatory meeting in Accra on 9 February.

In conclusion, I wish to urge our international partners to continue to support Guinea-Bissau in its efforts to sustain the gains made in consolidating peace, democracy and economic development by effectively participating in the donor pledging conference scheduled to take place on 25 March in Brussels.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Timor-Leste.

Mrs. Mesquita Borges (Timor-Leste): First of all, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this very important meeting. I also congratulate you, Sir, on the Chinese delegation's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month, and we wish you well. I also want to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Miguel Trovoada, for briefing us on the recent developments, and Ambassador Patriota in his capacity as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission.

I am honoured to address the Council this morning on behalf of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP), whose members are Angola, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, Sao Tome and Principe and, my own country, Timor-Leste.

Under the steady leadership of the newly elected authorities, Guinea-Bissau has made significant progress in recent months. They have taken the first steps to implement security sector reform, reinforce the judicial system, improve the management of State revenues and enhance the delivery of basic social services and utilities, with a particular focus on the education sector and Ebola prevention.

With regard to security sector reform, the new Armed Forces Chief of Staff has been reshuffling the leadership of various units since his appointment, and the Minister of Defence has established a committee to review the list of military personnel to demobilize through retirement. We thank the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) for the continued maintenance of the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB). We recognize the critical role it has played in maintaining stability, protecting the authorities and institutions and engaging in efforts aimed at security sector reform. Those efforts must continue in a sustainable way as part of a holistic programme and in coordination with other international partners that envisage resuming cooperation in that area, including CPLP countries.

The report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/37) points to the many challenges that lay ahead for Guinea-Bissau. We therefore encourage the Government to continue the State reforms aimed at greater political stability and socioeconomic development, at consolidating the rule of law and at protecting and promoting the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of all Bissau-Guineans. However, despite those accomplishments, Guinea-Bissau remains a post-conflict State with fragile institutions and scarce financial resources. It is therefore vital that the international community support the reform efforts in their technical and financial aspects, including by guaranteeing stability to enable the national authorities to implement the necessary reforms.

The CPLP and its member States remain deeply committed to supporting the people and authorities of Guinea-Bissau. On 29 October, an extraordinary meeting of the Council of Ministers of the CPLP reaffirmed the relevant role the Community can play in providing technical assistance to the country, drawing on the common language, administrative model and experience of its member States in cooperating with Guinea-Bissau.

As previously mentioned by the representative of Ghana, in November our respective Ministers for Foreign Affairs, as Chairs of ECOWAS and the CPLP respectively, hosted a very successful and fruitful meeting of the International Contact Group, where His Excellency Prime Minister Domingos Simões Pereira shared the Government's main reform priorities. The Group highlighted the need for ECOMIB to continue its mission. The Group also called upon all international

partners to actively participate in the Guinea-Bissau international donor conference scheduled for March 25 in Brussels.

On behalf of the CPLP, I want to assure Guinea-Bissau of the full support of all of the Community's member States to the donor conference, and that we will continue to seek the full engagement of all international partners. At this crucial juncture, it is imperative that the international community support the ongoing and planned reform efforts of the authorities of Guinea-Bissau and that all stakeholders align themselves with the priorities set by the Government and approved by the National Assembly.

The CPLP and its member States remain engaged in coordination efforts with the United Nations, ECOWAS, the African Union and the European Union. The Peacebuilding Commission, its Guinea-Bissau configuration and the International Contact Group are well-suited platforms to deepen that cooperation in support of the priorities identified by the Government of Guinea-Bissau.

Finally, we recognize the crucial role of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) and that of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. In that regard, we welcome the Secretary-General's recent report on Guinea-Bissau and its recommendations, which we fully support, particularly the extension of UNIOGBIS for a period of 12 months and the Council's endorsement of ECOMIB as a guarantor of stability and a partner in security sector reform.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.45 a.m.